

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1311
By Turner B

A RESOLUTION to honor Virginia Sivley Turner, a Woman of
Distinction.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly are pleased to specially recognize those outstanding citizens of our State who throughout their lives have distinguished themselves through exemplary family life, as entrepreneurs, in civic and community life, and in the political arena; and

WHEREAS, one such remarkable Tennessean is Virginia Sivley Turner of Chattanooga, wife of the late Bookie Turner, mother of J. Michael Turner and Representative Brenda K. Turner, the grandmother of Paige, Lindy and Jamey Turner, and the great-grandmother of Peyton and Kaleigh; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Sivley was born in 1922, the oldest of nine children of the late Russell Sivley and Ethel Sivley; her father was a school bus driver for Hamilton County schools and her mother was a cafeteria manager the Hamilton County schools; and

WHEREAS, Russell and Ethel Sivley each served the school system for 25 years, and were highly involved in community life and dedicated to improving the quality of life for the next generation. Her parents' example inspired Virginia to lead a life of public service, and she and her sisters were leaders in their respective professions when leadership roles did not come easily to women; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Sivley married Bookie Turner and the couple soon moved to Clinton, Tennessee, where Mr. Turner served as a chief counselor for Veterans Affairs, assisting newly returned veterans of World War II to find employment, and Virginia opened her first children's specialty store. Following the birth of their first child, Brenda, the young couple moved back to Chattanooga, where Mrs. Turner opened and managed another specialty

children's retail clothing and shoe store and Mr. Turner continued to work for the U.S.

Department of Veterans Affairs; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Turner quickly developed friendships and engaged in community volunteer service while running her store just outside the downtown area; she knew people in the suburban areas of Riverview, East Ridge, and Brainerd, which led her to establish children's Bazaar and Bootery Stores in the newly expanded suburban areas; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Turner's friendship with her clientele allowed her to acquire clothes in such a way that she could recommend specific outfits or accessories to her customers for their children, creating a manner of marketing almost never practiced today, and insuring customer loyalty; her Bootery and Youth Bazaars in Brainerd, East Ridge, and Riverview set the fashion and style for children throughout Chattanooga; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Turner's clothing and accessories inspired much pride in the parents and children of Chattanooga; her former clients, now adults, often approach her to remind her of how much pleasure they took in their outfits and how it enhanced their self-esteem; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Turner was an astute marketer, and was a long-time sponsor of "The Bob Brandy Show," where she gave away colored baby chickens at Easter; she was recognized for having the most beautiful retail display window during the Christmas season and was selected as "Owner and Manager of the Year" in the Chattanooga retail market; and

WHEREAS, in the early 1950's Virginia and Bookie, having reviewed the problems in Chattanooga, determined to become more involved in public life by entering the political arena; Mrs. Turner managed every campaign and was involved in sixteen elections for her husband during his career as Sheriff of Hamilton County and the Commissioner of Fire and Police of Chattanooga; and

WHEREAS, as a part of supporting her husband in his public offices, Virginia Turner became a stalwart volunteer in raising money for such agencies as the March of Dimes, the Heart Association, the DAR, Veterans Affairs, the VFW, and Democratic Women; the John F. Kennedy for President Campaign elected her to coordinate and lead the Women of East Tennessee for the John F. Kennedy for President campaign; and

WHEREAS, for three decades Mrs. Turner was a successful campaigner, participating in eleven elections for her daughter, Brenda K. Turner, now serving as Deputy Speaker of the Tennessee House of Representatives, in addition to the 16 elections for her husband; and

WHEREAS, Deputy Speaker Brenda Turner credits her mother for the leadership skills that serve her well today, saying, "I would never have felt the confidence, and attained the knowledge that I have today without my mother. Her practice of life and her inspiration has been a great gift from God to me. She is a woman of faith and an inspirational leader to all who have known her and shared a part of their life with her."; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Turner has been a licensed funeral director since the 1980's, assisting her husband in the family business, Turner Funeral Homes; she and her son, J. Mike Turner, continue to operate two funeral homes that serve the Chattanooga area; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Turner remains an exceptional woman with a myriad of talents, whose lifelong knowledge of and love for the people of Chattanooga have served her well; her character has been enhanced by her beauty, intelligence, and a life lived with an unshakable faith and love of God; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Turner was always a best friend to her spouse, as she is to her children, their friends, and all who know her; crediting a loving God watching over her life and her missions, she continues to live a life characterized by sensitivity to others; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we join with the family and friends of Virginia Turner, the people of Chattanooga and Hamilton County, and indeed, all Tennesseans in recognizing Virginia Sivley Turner as a Woman of Distinction, commend and thank her for her life of purpose, accomplishment and love, and offer her our best wishes for much happiness in the years to come.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.